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Also, will all teachers who have introduced the International Correspondence into their classes, whether they desire to compete for the prizes or not, send their address, with the full name of their institutions, to the chairman of this committee, and state how long the International Correspondence has been introduced, and the number of students now engaged in it. An early report upon this subject is earnestly requested.

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OLD FRENCH LITERATURE.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES,

DEAR SIR:—*The Round Table before Wace*, is a monograph including pages 182-205 of the *Harvard Studies*. The author aims to show that Wace is speaking the truth in the *Roman de Brut* (vv. 9998-9) where the poet refers his account of King Arthur's Round Table to Celtic tradition. In view of the silence of Welsh literature and Geoffrey of Monmouth's omission of any reference, Wace's statement has been rejected by a number of scholars as unreliable.

To vindicate the Norman poet—the first writer to mention the Round Table—and also to support the view of a Celtic origin, the author turns to the *Brut* of Layamon. He argues, from the peculiarly barbarian color of Layamon's Round Table story, unusual with the poet, who rather takes pains to tone down coarse detail elsewhere, that it must represent a native Welsh tale familiar to Layamon by reason of his close contact with Wales.

writers. From such accounts as the *Story of*

¹ Reprinted from Vol. VII of *Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*. Published under the direction of the Modern Language Departments of Harvard University. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1900.

As evidence, further, that Layamon did not invent the episode of the Round Table, which he added to Wace, and the incidental quarrels over precedence at feasts, a number of examples are cited from ancient Irish saga *Mac Datho's Pig* and *The Feast of Bricriu* marked resemblance is shown with Layamon's tale sufficient to admit this latter into the circle of primitive Welsh story.

The author recognizes the objection that, although the Round Table is a Pan-Celtic institution, as he maintains from the Irish sources just given and from the Greek historian Posidonius as well, its connection with Arthur may have been late and first made in Armorica. His reply is the difficulty of supposing a Round Table without an Arthur to give the tradition fixity. Some hero must have presided and the Celts had but one. The treatise is concise, not to say brief, containing very full notes and references and, as an exposition of proof is well ordered.

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BRIEF MENTION.

THE educational reform movement in Germany has scored some important points in the past year. Last May a meeting at Berlin, of philologists and others connected with or interested in higher instruction, adopted and submitted to the government the following resolutions: first, that all graduates of *Mittelschulen* with nine years' courses (*Gymnasien*, *Realgymnasien*, and *Ober-Realschulen*) should be on a footing of equality with regard to the pursuit of higher scientific and professional studies, notably those of medicine and law, for which at present a *Gymnasium* preparation or its equivalent (with prescribed Greek) is required; and second, that the *Mittelschulen* in question should be reorganized so as to offer, in the first three years, a uniform course of study without Latin, thus

enabling the student to postpone the choice between the different courses, that is, the different institutions, until the end of the third year. Something like this arrangement has long been felt by many to be the only possible solution of the problem of higher education; and the curriculum of the so-called *Reformgymnasien*, in which the study of Greek is not begun until the sixth year, instead of in the fourth, marks an important step in that direction. The *Konferenz zur Schulreform*, to which the above-mentioned resolutions were communicated, endorsed the first of the two, but was not ready to agree to the second. Now, however, Emperor William has followed up his previous utterances on the subject with an edict (dated November 20th, and published in the *Reichs-Anzeiger*), in which he indicates the lines along which the reform is to be carried out in Prussia. The most noteworthy points in it are the following: The *Gymnasium*, the *Realgymnasium*, and the *Ober-Realschule* are to be regarded as "in der Erziehung zur allgemeinen Geistesbildung gleichwertig"; the rights of the two institutions last mentioned are, therefore, to be extended; the equality of the three kinds of schools being granted, there is to be, on the other hand, no objection to the emphasizing of the peculiar character of each, as for instance by the extension of the time allotted to Latin in the *Gymnasium* and the *Realgymnasium*; the instruction in Greek is to avoid all "unnütze Formalien," and to aim solely at the appreciation of the literature and of the relation between ancient and modern culture; in the fourth, fifth and sixth years of the *Gymnasium* course the student is to have the choice between Greek and English; wherever local conditions make special attention to English in a *Gymnasium* desirable, this study is to be prescribed, from the seventh year to the end of the course, in the place of French, which will then become an elective; the final examination (*Abiturientenexamen*) is to be abolished as soon as possible; and the experiment with curricula like those of the *Reformgymnasien* of Frankfurt and Altona, which has so far proven success-

ful, is to be continued on a larger scale.

It will not be long now until the departments of medicine and law in the German universities will be opened to the graduates of the *Realgymnasien* and *Ober-Realschulen*; and there is but little to be said against such a measure. The *Abiturientenexamen* will not be missed; it has been pedagogically a failure, if not a positive detriment. But the shortening of the course in Greek, without a proportionate increase in the number of the recitations devoted to it, would be a most serious loss to the cause of classical studies; it is to be hoped that the wording of the edict, which is not very clear on this point, does not, as interpreted above, represent the Emperor's actual intentions.

IN *The Golden Book of Venice*,¹ which is entitled *A historical romance of the sixteenth century*, we have in reality a series of pictures, excellently drawn, of the life of Venice at the end of the sixteenth century. The admirable artistic appreciation of Venetian colour and magnificence, shown by the author, especially in the gorgeous descriptions of church and state festivals, is the chief recommendation of the work, and, by comparison with this attraction the interest of the story becomes slight. In addition to the artistic merit, however, the representation of the episodes in the history of the republic, which are embraced by the story, is exceedingly true and vivid: especially is this the case with regard to the crisis of the years 1606-7, when Venice lay under the interdict of Paul V. The figure of Fra Paolo Sarpi, of the order of the "Servi di Maria," both as youthful orator and leading diplomatist of Venice, is exceptionally striking and attractive.

¹ By Mrs. Lawrence Turnbull (New York, The Century Co., 1900).